

CREATIVE THINKING IN FASHION & TEXTILE DESIGN: Idea Generation, Reflected in the Visual Journal

by Anna Bannò

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

Master of Design (Research)

under the supervision of Dr Zoe Sadokierski and
Dr Alexandra Crosby.

University of Technology Sydney
Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building

November 2020

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Anna Bannò declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Design (Research) in the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information, sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

This research is supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program.

Production Note:

Signature: Signature removed prior to publication.

Date:

25. 06. 2020.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am profoundly grateful for all the support I have received during the course of this research.

I would firstly like to thank Dr Zoe Sadokierski, my primary supervisor, for agreeing to take me with all my tangential ideas under her wing, and Dr Alexandra Crosby, my secondary supervisor, for joining in. Together they have provided continued guidance, encouragement and reassurance when I needed it most. Their kind and constructive feedback has not only helped reel me in from wandering too far down an interesting path but has also allowed me to explore widely enough to find my voice as a reflective practitioner dipping her toes into scholarly research. I also thank Hazel Baker for her editing expertise.

I extend a special thank you to all the willing participants in the study for sharing their personal stories and creative insights, especially the designers whom I had the pleasure of interviewing. Their openness and willingness to share their thoughts and expertise has given the findings of this study a unique depth and richness. Their inspiring example embodies what it means to be a creative professional today and has made my case easier to present.

I also thank my family, close friends and colleagues who listened as I rambled on about my latest interesting find, and kept me fed, watered and sane throughout, providing much love, support, time and space to write, as well as distractions when needing time out.

Lastly, I dedicate this work to my mother Lidia, from whom I'm certain I inherit my creativity. I thank her for dedicating her life to ensuring I have been able to develop my own.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ABSTRACT	ix
 1. INTRODUCTION	 1
THESIS STRUCTURE	3
OVERVIEW OF STUDY	4
Early Stage Creative Process	4
Key Areas of Research	5
LIMITATIONS	7
SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY	8
Towards a Creative Economy	8
Systemic Change in the Design Industry	9
 2. CONTEXTUAL REVIEW	 11
2.1 CREATIVITY IN DESIGN PRACTICE	11
Understanding Creativity	11
The Domain of Design	16
The Creative Design Process	15
Creative Design Practice	18
The Creative Design Professional	19
Creative Thinking in Design	22
The Ideation Stage	32
Conclusion	33
2.2 REFLECTIVE PRACTICE	34
Schön's Legacy	34
Reflection-in-Action	36
The Creative Feedback Loop in Design	38
Experience, Repertoire and Artistry-in-Action	41
Beyond Schön	43
Reflective Creative Practice	47

The Critically Reflective Practitioner	53
Conclusion	56
2.3 VISUAL THINKING	57
Graphicacy	57
Visual Thinking in Design	59
Drawing in The Design Process	63
Sketchnoting	68
Conclusion	69
2.4 VISUAL JOURNAL STUDY	71
Reflective Journals	71
The Visual Journal in Creative Practice	73
Review of Visual Journals in Design Practice	75
Conclusion	103
3. METHODOLOGY	104
3.1 OVERVIEW	104
3.2 ONLINE SURVEY	105
Survey Design	105
Target Population and Sample Size	106
Participation.....	107
Survey Data Analysis Process	108
3.3 INTERVIEWS	110
Interview Design	110
Participants	111
Set 1: Independent Designers	111
Set 2: In-house Designers	112
Professional Context	113
Interviews Data Analysis Process	114
4. RESEARCH FINDINGS	116
4.1 IDEA GENERATION AS THOUGHT-TO-ACTION BEHAVIOUR	116
The Sensory Research Process	116

Navigating Messiness and Ambiguity	120
Channelling Intuition	124
Building Ideas with Intention	126
The Importance of a Visual Language	127
Communicating Ideas	128
4.2 THE ROLE OF THE VISUAL JOURNAL	136
The Journal as a Tool (form) and Reflective Practice (use)	137
Significance of Content	151
4.3 DIGITAL PROMINENCE	154
Accessibility of Tools and Data	154
Digital vs By Hand	156
4.4 PERSONAL IS PROFESSIONAL	160
Creative Crossover	160
Pursuing Passions and Autonomy	165
Time In and Out	167
Creativity and Commerce	169
Conclusion	173
5. OUTCOMES	175
6. APPENDICES	178
APENDIX A - Glossary of Key Terms	178
APENDIX B - Survey Data and Analysis	179
APENDIX C - Key Themes List	202
APENDIX D - Original Working Diagrams	204
Overview Maps	204
Working Diagrams	208
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY	212

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Fig. 1 - Author's diagram of the design process, highlighting the early stages</i>	4
<i>Fig. 2 - The Complete Four-C Model of Creativity (Kaufman & Beghetto 2009) with author's annotation</i>	15
<i>Fig. 3 - A thinking model of the design process (Lawson 2006, p. 49)</i>	17
<i>Fig. 4 - Spectrum of design activities, experience and thinking (Dorst 2015, pp. 56-57), with author's annotation</i>	18
<i>Fig. 5 - Double Diamond Model of the Design Process (UK Design Council 2005)</i>	25
<i>Fig. 6 - Author's proposal for a creative thinking model of the design process</i>	29
<i>Fig. 7 - Detail of the early stages of the Design Process (UK Design Council 2005)</i>	32
<i>Fig. 8 - Author's diagram representing the transformative activity in the reflective practice process</i>	37
<i>Fig. 9 - Author's diagram of the stages of professional experience and reflective practice</i>	42
<i>Fig. 10 - Reflection-for-action as a looping process (Gray & Malins, 2004, p. 57), with author's annotation</i>	45
<i>Fig. 11 - Diagram of Reflective Practice (S & N Thompson 2018, p. 12), with annotation</i>	45
<i>Fig. 12 - Author's diagram representing the reflection-ON-IN-FOR-action cycle of experience in creative practice</i>	47
<i>Fig. 13 - Author's diagram interpreting Linda Candy's five forms of reflective practice</i>	49
<i>Fig. 14 - Three types of thinking in reflective practice (S. & N. Thompson, 2016, p. 34), with author's annotation</i>	54
<i>Fig. 15 - Author's proposal for types of thinking in the creative reflective practice model</i>	55
<i>Fig. 16 - Three environments of drawing in the design process model (Schenk 2016, p. 196)</i>	67
<i>Fig. 17 - Map of literature reviewed on visual journals in design.</i>	75
<i>Fig. 18 - Creative workspace and personal journal of Paul Smith (Nielson & Hartman, 2005, pp. 185-6)</i>	77
<i>Fig. 19 - Various journal pages from Annie Albers' Notebook (2017)</i>	80
<i>Fig. 20 - Journal pages of Eley Kishimoto (Davies 2010, pp. 73-75)</i>	81
<i>Fig. 21 - Digital drawings of Clover Canyon (Davies 2013, pp. 68-71)</i>	82
<i>Fig. 22 - Conceptual sketches of Thom Browne (Davies 2013, pp. 200-203)</i>	83
<i>Fig. 23 - Sketching with fabric by Teatum Jones (Davies 2013, pp. 190-195)</i>	84
<i>Fig. 24 - Visual studio environment of Marios Schwab (Davies 2013, pp. 134-137)</i>	85
<i>Fig. 25 - Collaged inspirations that inspire sketch work by Clemens Ribeiro (Davies 2010, pp. 62-67)</i>	86
<i>Fig. 26 - Mood board for S/S 2009 collection by Dries Van Noten (Davies 2010, p. 65)</i>	87
<i>Fig. 27 - Research books of John Galliano. (Davies 2010, p. 105)</i>	88
<i>Fig. 28 - Sketches of Karl Lagerfeld being actualised (Davies 2010, pp. 112-13)</i>	89

<i>Fig. 29 - Various pages from Talking to Myself (Yamamoto 2002)</i>	90
<i>Fig. 30 - Photographs of Yamamoto's creative process. (Vartanian 2011, pp. 75-76)</i>	91
<i>Fig. 31 - Sketchbook pages of Nigel Holmes (O'Donnell 2009, pp. 84-85)</i>	92
<i>Fig. 32 - Sketch walls of Morag Myerscough (O'Donnell 2009, pp. 134-35)</i>	92
<i>Fig. 33 - Commentary and sketchbook pages of Giancarlo Illiprandi (Illiprandi 2015, pp. 67, 115, 124 -25)</i>	93
<i>Fig. 34 - Exhibited visual journals of Tadanori Yokoo (Vartanian 2011, pp. 24-25)</i>	94
<i>Fig. 35 - Post-it walls in the creative workspace of Will Self (Vartanian 2011, pp. 14-15)</i>	95
<i>Fig. 36 - Observational drawings of Maira Kalamán (New 2007, pp. 23, 25)</i>	97
<i>Fig. 37 - Reflective sketching of Anderson Kenny (New 2007, pp. 83, 86-7)</i>	98
<i>Fig. 38 - Form studies of Erica Bohanon (New 2007, pp. 122-23)</i>	99
<i>Fig. 39 - Textile composition studies of Denise Schmidt (New 2007, pp. 177, 179-80)</i>	100
<i>Fig. 40 - A notebook sheet c. 1490 by Leonardo Da Vinci (Isaacson 2017 p. 109)</i>	102
<i>Fig. 41 - User participation data snapshot from online survey platform</i>	107
<i>Fig. 42 - Example of long-answer question with analysis by hand</i>	109
<i>Fig. 43 - Table of designers interviewed</i>	113
<i>Fig. 44 - Visual depiction of the two types of working structures</i>	114
<i>Fig. 45 - Kate's creative studio and workspace environment</i>	121
<i>Fig. 46 - Examples of Kate's sketchbooks and page detail</i>	138
<i>Fig. 47 - Kate's journal pages featured in e-book (Skeehan 2006, pp. 156-57)</i>	139
<i>Fig. 48 - Kate's sketchbook image shared on website</i>	139
<i>Fig. 49 - Kate's project mapping and print compositions</i>	140
<i>Fig. 50 - Kate's pose sketches and form studies</i>	141
<i>Fig. 51 - Kate's project planning notes</i>	141
<i>Fig. 52 - Elise's journals in her home workspace</i>	143
<i>Fig. 53 - Fiona's sketchbooks in her home studio</i>	144
<i>Fig. 54 - Fiona's folder and sketchbook page detail</i>	144
<i>Fig. 55 - Tanya's travel journals and page details</i>	145
<i>Fig. 56 - Detail of Tanya's sketches and travel notes</i>	145
<i>Fig. 57 - Joanna's dot notebooks and preferred pen</i>	148
<i>Fig. 58 - Joanna's diagrams and shorthand notes</i>	148

<i>Fig. 59 - Joanna's sketchnotes, lines, boxes and arrows</i>	149
<i>Fig. 60 - Jane's list pages and point form notes</i>	150
<i>Fig. 61 - Details and key words or phrases from Jane's notebooks</i>	150
<i>Fig. 62 - Coloured notes, lists and boxed or circled priorities from Jane's notebooks</i>	150
<i>Fig. 63 - Post-it notes and sketchnotes from Jane's notebooks</i>	151
<i>Fig. 64 - Jane's Pinterest folders as digital journals</i>	151
<i>Fig. 65 - Author's early planning journal entry</i>	204
<i>Fig. 66 - Author's early overview of research presented at Stage 1</i>	205
<i>Fig. 67 - Screenshot from author's private research blog. Overview Maps post, Sep 23rd, 2019</i>	205
<i>Fig. 68 - Author's experimentation with Moleskine digital notebook</i>	206
<i>Fig. 69 - Snapshot of animated overview map created by author in digital notebook</i>	206
<i>Fig. 70 - Talking sketch created by author used to explain research to another experienced designer</i>	207
<i>Fig. 71 - Author's final overview map of research</i>	207
<i>Fig. 72 - Author's working diagram for Fig. 8</i>	208
<i>Fig. 73 - Author's working diagram for Fig. 9</i>	208
<i>Fig. 74 - Author's thinking diagram exploring reflective practice and creative thinking in the design process</i>	209
<i>Fig. 75 - Author's working diagram for Fig. 6</i>	209
<i>Fig. 76 - Author's working diagrams for Fig. 12</i>	210
<i>Fig. 77 - Author's working diagram for Fig. 13</i>	210
<i>Fig. 78 - Author's working diagrams for Fig. 15</i>	211

ABSTRACT

The creative thinking that takes part in the early stages of design projects is often highly conceptual, rarely seen by others and can be difficult for designers to share. Therefore, its importance may not be well understood, leading to miscommunication and missed opportunities in the early stages of a design project.

This study looks at creative thinking in the early ideation phase of the design process and how experienced professional designers across the fashion and textile design field document their thinking and ideas using expanded forms of visual journals. Drawing on theories of creativity and through the analysis of visual journals and the working environments of experienced creative professionals, it investigates what constitutes visual journaling in design, what evidence of creative thinking can be found there, and how they facilitate visual thinking and idea generation through a reflective practice lens.

The insights captured not only shed light on how designers in the fashion and textile design field think, work and strategise creatively but demonstrate how critical the early creative thinking process is to the success of a project and how a designer's visual language and their expanded forms of visual journals support their creative thinking and idea generation process. Furthermore, there is a strong need for design professionals to cultivate more time and space for the early creative stages and re-orientate to a creative thinking focused approach to the design process in order to improve ideas, how they are communicated and strengthen their creative voice and influence in industry.

KEY WORDS:

creative thinking | idea generation | early-stage design process | reflective practice | visual journaling | visual thinking | creative design professionals | fashion and textile design | creative development